

Phacelia inconspicua E. Greene**OBSCURE SCORPION PLANT**

FAMILY: *Hydrophyllaceae*, the waterleaf family.

STATUS:

Heritage Program SENSITIVE LIST, ranks: G2 S1

USFWS/ESA: species of concern. **STATE OF NEVADA:** FULLY PROTECTED. **BLM:** Special Status Species in Nevada. **USFS:** Humboldt-Toiyabe NF Sensitive Species. **NNNPS:** ENDANGERED.

POPULATION CENSUS (NEVADA): 4 occurrences mapped; total estimated individuals 3713+, total estimated area 14.4+ ha (35.6+ ac). **TREND:** unknown.

IMPACTS AND MAJOR THREATS (NEVADA): Vulnerable to mineral exploration and development, fire suppression and catastrophic fire, competition with invasive weeds, concentrated trampling by livestock and feral horses.

INVENTORY EFFORT (NEVADA): Systematic surveys have been performed, but much potential habitat north and east of the Humboldt Range remains to be searched in Nevada. Most recent entered survey 1995, average year of last survey 1995. **Years since last entered survey** (percent of mapped records at various survey ages): **6-10 yrs:** 100%.

LAND MANAGEMENT (NEVADA) in decreasing predominance: U. S. Bureau of Land Management, private lands.

RANGE: Pershing County, Nevada; also in ID. In Nevada known only from the northern Humboldt Range. Maximum Nevada **range dimension 4.4 km (2.7 mi)** excluding most disjunct record.

ELEVATIONS RECORDED (NEVADA): 5000-8280 feet (1524-2524 meters).

HABITAT (NEVADA): Relatively deep, undisturbed, organic-rich soils on fairly steep, concave, N- to NE-facing slopes where snow drifts persist well into spring, on small, otherwise barren soil terraces in shrub fields dominated by *Artemisia tridentata* vaseyana in association with *Holodiscus microphyllus*, *Symphoricarpos rotundifolius*, and *Leymus cinereus*.

PHENOLOGY: flowering late-spring, Depending on elevation and moisture, flowering probably begins sometime between late May and late June and continues sporadically into July. The fruit probably mature by 2-3 weeks after flowering, between early June and early August. Range of most frequent **survey months:** June-July.

LIFE-FORM AND HABIT: annual.

DESCRIPTION: An annual herb, 0.5-2 dm tall. Herbage is covered with hairs. Congested clusters of small pale blue or whitish flowers bloom June-July. **Distinguishing features:** In *P. inconspicua* all hairs are non-glandular, the inflorescences are ebracteate and exceeded by the subtending leaves, the stamens are shortly exerted, and the fruits produce only 2 or 4 seeds. Similar to *P. austromontana*, *P. humilis*, and *P. minutissima*. *P. inconspicua* has flowers that are smaller than those of *P. humilis*; *P. austromontana* has a generally more southern distribution, is glandular, and usually has at least some leaves with 1-2 lobes; *P. minutissima* is also glandular, has leafy inflorescences longer than the subtending leaves, well-included stamens, and produces as many as a dozen seeds per capsule.

PHOTOGRAPHS: Holland (1996); Nevada Natural Heritage Program slide collection (1986-present).

ILLUSTRATIONS: Cronquist et al. (1984), Mozingo and Williams (1980).

SPECIFIC REFERENCES:

Chatterley, M. 1980. Status report for *Phacelia inconspicua*. Portland, Oregon: U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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